

TITLE V—DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, acting jointly, are authorized to approve on behalf of the committee any rule or regulation for which the committee's approval is required, provided advance notice of their intention to do so is given to members of the committee.

THE NATIONAL GUARD

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the National Guard, to mark its 368th birthday on December 13.

The National Guard was founded in 1636 and has answered the call to protect this great Nation in the face of every conflict. It was formed even before the birth of America and continues to serve as a safeguard against all enemies and oppressors.

The Guard is now a force of more than 450,000 men and women strong, proudly bearing the seal of American dreams. More than 95,000 of those are serving overseas in Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia, protecting America on foreign soil. As some of the Nation's finest, they do not only protect us abroad but do the same here at home, dependably defending us against foreign threats and terrorists.

However, protecting the American people is only part of the heroic contributions the Guard provides us. Those brave souls also serve as rescuers, reaching out to those who are victims of natural disaster, and supporting our people in neighborhoods and communities in times of desperation and need. From coast to coast and around the world, all humanity can count on these valiant Americans.

Each of us owes a great debt of gratitude to every member of the National Guard, from the past and the present, for their sacrifice and dedication to protecting America's cherished freedoms and democracy. It is wonderful that we can honor the National Guard on its birthday and remember its significance to the people.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

Late last summer, a man was beaten, robbed, and sexually assaulted by a group of three men and one teenager. The alleged motivation behind the assault was the sexual orientation of the victim. The group of assailants met the victim at a gay bar, and he was allegedly targeted because he was gay.

I believe that the government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS EXPORT FACILITATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, I rise today in support of a bill that will facilitate the sale of U.S. agricultural products abroad. I am delighted to join colleagues from both sides of the aisle in cosponsoring this bill, which will help remove potential impediments to the shipment of U.S. agricultural goods to Cuba.

Cuba's geographic proximity to the U.S. makes it an important market for U.S. exporters. This bill will maintain significant economic benefits not only for the farmers in my home State of Indiana, but for farmers throughout the country. Agricultural trade with Cuba is currently allowed under the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, TSREEA. This legislation was enacted in the 106th Congress to provide additional markets for U.S. agricultural products and support the American farmer. I have long been an advocate of exercising care when imposing unilateral economic sanctions. Numerous studies have shown that unilateral sanctions rarely succeed and often harm the United States more than the target country. Sanctions can jeopardize billions of dollars in U.S. export earnings and hundreds of thousands of American jobs. They frequently weaken our international competitiveness by yielding to other countries those markets and opportunities that we abandon.

There have been indications that TSREEA will be interpreted in a way that may serve to impede agricultural exports to Cuba, which is contrary to the original intent of the bill. This would be a departure from current policy and undermine the benefits for U.S. farmers which the act has achieved. Groups such as the American Farm Bureau have indicated that the opening up of Cuba as a market has provided significant benefit to their members.

Without the important changes that this bill will make, the U.S. economy could be impacted, not only in agricultural exports, but also in related economic output. To prevent this occurrence and to help bolster the agricultural export industry in the U.S., I ask you to join me and the other cosponsors in support of this important legislation.

BRUNSWICK NAVAL AIR STATION'S STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, Brunswick Naval Air Station, which is in my own home State of Maine, is a facility

of great importance to our Nation's military. While I could reflect today upon the bravery and tenacity of the P-3 Orion pilots at Brunswick who have supported the global war on terrorism, today I share with my colleagues the significant benefits and strategic advantages that Brunswick Naval Air Station offers our efforts in the areas of homeland defense and maritime interdiction operations. As we look toward the future, and develop new tools to address future threats, we must ensure that these tools are located in facilities where their advanced capabilities can be fully utilized. Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that a white paper, authored by Ralph Dean, one of Brunswick's great advocates, entitled *Homeland Defense and Maritime Interdiction Operations*, be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. The white paper provides significant insight on the great advantages that Brunswick Naval Air Station offers.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

HOMELAND DEFENSE AND MARITIME INTERDICTION OPERATIONS

In the business of homeland defense (as in real estate), location is the key. Imagine a naval search for a single, relatively small merchant ship, which intelligence sources have revealed has a hold full of weaponized chemicals. Its destination is a major coastal city. After tense hours of searching, a maritime patrol aircraft locates two possible suspect vessels out of hundreds in one of the world's busiest maritime areas. The aircraft directs two fast naval frigates to the vicinity of the targets. The frigates and their on-board helicopters intercept and challenge the target vessels. One vessel submits to search and is determined to be harmless. The other however, resists interception and boarding. Finally, helicopter-borne special operations commandoes descend upon the vessel, board and secure the ship and its potentially deadly cargo.

This scenario actually occurred in the western Mediterranean Sea last month. The weapons of mass destruction seized were simulated; the entire sequence of events part of a successful exercise of Maritime Interdiction Operations conducted by forces of four NATO nations.

Maritime interdiction capability is a hot item right now for defense planners, a particularly important focus of a larger effort known as the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). PSI is being advanced by 15 core member nations, brought together at the request of President Bush last year to develop cooperative diplomatic, military, and intelligence means to stop ships which may be carrying weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Many of the maritime interdiction precepts under PSI are evolving from a multinational "game" conducted last September at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and refining these concepts and procedures is clearly a high priority for the nations involved. Japan recently hosted the latest multinational PSI exercise, the twelfth in the short time since the Initiative began.

As the Mediterranean exercise and others showed, Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) are a critical, almost always essential part of successful maritime interdiction. Whether conducting a broad-area search, refining a datum provided by other (including national) sensors, or vectoring surface, rotary-wing or